



## Freewheeling Cash Rewards Equals More Riders, More Drivers, More Bookkeepers

**F**eeling frustrated when you need more riders, drivers or bookkeepers for your vanpool? If so, then Freewheeling Vanpool Rewards may be the perfect tool for you. Use it to sell joining a vanpool or becoming a driver or bookkeeper to other commuters to keep your vanpool healthy.

New riders and primary bookkeepers receive a \$75 MasterCard gift card and new drivers a \$100 gift card.

But wait! There is also something in it for you if you recruit new riders to

### Registration page is now available!

your vanpool or someone else's. You can receive

up to \$500 in gift card rewards for recruiting up to 10 new riders!

Go to RideshareOnline.com and click on Freewheeling for more details or to register for your rewards. Or, call 206-625-4500. Remember, Rideshare staff have other tools to help you find new riders when you need them.

Freewheeling, Vanpooling is Your Trip Your Way, is the first statewide vanpool education campaign sponsored

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## 2004 Diamond Winner for ETC Leadership — Jan Law

**A**mglen is a global biotechnology company that taps the power of scientific discovery and innovation to dramatically improve people's lives. The company is also committed to helping its employees live healthier lives. One way it does this is by providing an outstanding employee commute trip reduction program that reduces daily stress while also saving them time and money.

It is no surprise that the employee transportation administrator for Amgen's CTR program embodies that same dedication to helping her co-workers identify alternatives to driving alone to work. For her outstanding efforts as ETC at Amgen, Jan Law was awarded a 2004 Commuter Challenge Diamond Award for ETC Leadership. Jan says "Innovation means teamwork — whether we're making important scientific discoveries or finding efficient ways to commute".

Key to Jan's success as ETC is the support she provides Amgen employees in helping them find the commute mode that works best for them. Jan believes the "one-on-one service" she offers employees is essential to the success of the program. Even before employees are hired, Jan provides them a copy of the brochure describing the excellent transportation benefits Amgen offers its employees. As soon as employees are hired, Jan personally contacts them to learn where they commute from and provides them information on their best commute choices.

Vanpooling is a very viable option for many Amgen employees.

Jan takes a very active role in promoting vanpooling. She carefully analyzes employee zip code data to determine where there is the potential for vanpool formations and then contacts employees living in close enough proximity to vanpool together. Jan also

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Jan Law



### Why is 6 afraid of 7? Because of 7 8 9. Or was that a 2?

Over 3,000 of you give your bookkeepers photocopies of fare media each month to pay your vanpool fare. We not only match up the photocopies we receive to who's listed on the Ridership Report, we also enter the fare media serial number as part of processing your group's account. Please help your bookkeeper (and us) by making sure the photocopy you provide is readable. That includes the Month/Year, all logos or company names, your printed name on the back and the pass serial number. If we can't match the photocopy to a name on the Ridership Report and read the serial number, we won't be able to accept it as fare payment. ■

### Find Vanpool Monthly Reporting Forms at Metro Online

We've added two types of Monthly and Ridership Report forms to our website. The first are files (PDFs) that you can print, fill out and mail in. The second is an Excel worksheet that includes the Monthly Report and Ridership Report. You can open this file, save it to a location on your own computer, then fill it in, print it and mail it in to us. Neither file can be submitted to us via email yet — you'll still need to use a postage paid envelope. ■



*Back row, left to right: Shannon Sorem, Irene Matern, Ken Broman, Stephanie Ponder, Steve Matalon. Front row, left to right: Greg Kearl, Mark Downey. Not pictured: Ed Gibson.*

*Stephanie Ponder, our contest winner, sports the Poky Little Puppy ears*



## The HMS Poky Little Puppy Sets Sail

**All of us  
get along  
so well  
that we  
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getting  
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after  
work.**

**O**ur Capitol Hill vanpool evolved from regular

carpooling to Costco's headquarters in Issaquah. We'd been doing that for a few months when we found other people in our neighborhood who also wanted to vanpool. Soon we had a full van—three drivers and a bookkeeper—and, in the spring of 2002, Vanpool 9353 was born.

It occurred to us that surely we had the hippest and most fun vanpool, being from Capitol Hill of course. And the conversations we had to and from work kept us laughing for days. Slowly, as these things happen, the ridership changed, but never the dynamic. We still all talked and even hung out after work.

At some point I started calling whoever was last to the van the "Poky Little Puppy," taking the title from the children's book. That led me to buy a pair of dog ears on a headband that signified that day's Poky Little Puppy. The ears are awfully cute, although I'm not sure how much of a deterrent they are. We keep a copy of the book in the vehicle and have even dubbed

*By Stephanie E. Ponder  
VanPool Voices Contest Winner*

our van the HMS Poky Little Puppy.

It was with the departure of a rider named Matt that we instituted the "goodbye" pancake breakfast at Capitol Hill's IHOP. Although we were sad to say goodbye to Matt, we loved the pancakes. And so for the past three years we've left our meeting spot an hour early to have pancakes for Christmas, to celebrate the anniversary of the van, and to say goodbye to other riders. Even past riders have gotten up extra early to meet us at IHOP just so we could all have breakfast together. I can't imagine any other vanpool where that happens.

All of us get along so well that we have now started getting together after work. Once the van is safely parked, we meet at a local restaurant for some snacks, a beverage, and a chance to hang out and talk where there's just a little bit more legroom.

I've met some great people who I never would have known without the vanpool program. The past several years would not have been the same without you! ■

## VanPool Ridership

# That Magic Number

Many of you are familiar with Metro's "minimum five" requirement: "You need five people to start a vanpool group." "In order to keep your vanpool going, you'll need to keep a minimum ridership of five participants." This minimum is based on the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 82.12 for a ridesharing van.

For some groups, maintaining five is not a problem. But, for others, it can mean a lot of hard work. We know this! That's why Metro provides vanpools with less than five poolers at least 45 days to get their ridership back up. We also offer a number of resources for any vanpool seeking riders:

- **Your Metro Vanpool Services Representative** – Let your VSR know if you are in trouble! They can get your van on the Riders Wanted Bulletin, provide you with advice, or refer you to other staff who will assist you, one-on-one, with your search.
- **RideshareOnline.com** – Every Metro vanpool has a record in our online ridematch database, RideshareOnline.com. Log into your record and search for potential riders. It is a very powerful tool that many vanpool groups already use.
- **Metro's Vanpool Riders Wanted Bulletin** – This bulletin lists all the Metro vanpool groups that are looking for riders. Many employers post the bulletin at work, and it is available online too.
- **Incentive Programs** – Pique potential riders' interest with vanpool rewards. The state's Freewheeling vanpool campaign provides new participants with \$75 in MasterCard gift card rewards, new drivers with a \$100 reward and new primary bookkeepers with a \$75 reward. And don't forget, vanpoolers are eligible for a bonus of \$50 for each new rider they recruit. This is just one example of programs in place to encourage ridesharing. Check in with your Employee Transportation Coordinator at work to see what's available to you.

All of these resources can work together to help groups maintain healthy ridership levels and, of course, keep fares manageable. Rest assured, rideshare staff are committed to helping increase ridership to keep groups happy with their commute. ■

## EPA Puts R-TRIP at the Front of the Class

Each year the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognizes innovative work that improves

air quality. This year, EPA honors went to the City of Redmond's Redmond Trip Incentive Program (R-TRIP), the nation's first publicly sponsored program of its kind. Since 1998 the City of Redmond, the Greater Redmond Transportation Management Association (GRTMA) and King County Metro have partnered with local businesses to encourage commuters to rideshare, use transit, bike, or walk to work. Here's how R-TRIP's programs reduce pollution by increasing ridesharing:

Vanpoolers have a special advantage with R-TRIP's Commuter Club. The club offers vanpoolers incentives for joining

and participating in vanpooling. In addition, R-TRIP provides personalized rideshare trip planning, vanpool

formations provided by King County Metro and 'starter' subsidies for new vanpool riders. Redmond employers are also offered R-TRIP grants to start or enhance their commute trip reduction programs.

Kudos to all Redmond commuters who help R-TRIP's innovative programs excel by sharing the ride to work. And a special round of applause for the 499 Redmond commuters who have started vanpooling since the Commuter Club started! And another round of applause for the 59 new vanpools R-TRIP has formed since 2003!

Find out more about this award winning program at [www.GOTrip.com](http://www.GOTrip.com). ■



## Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel Closure

The Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel will be closed for up to two years, beginning September 24, 2005 to retrofit it for use by both buses and light rail. During that time, bus passengers whose routes now run in the tunnel will be boarding their buses on the surface streets.

Traveling to downtown Seattle for work or play during the temporary tunnel closure will be made easier through programs developed by King County Metro Transit, Sound Transit, Community Transit, and the City of Seattle. Special incentive programs will be available to commuters coming into downtown Seattle. New vanpool participants will receive a \$100 gift card (good as cash) and new vanpool drivers will receive a \$150 gift card. Additional information on the incentive programs will be provided in the next issue of Vanpool Voices. ■



# VanPool Trivia

## How Does Your Commute Compare?

With over 660 vanpools on the road, Metro vans rack up over ten million commute miles a year. But it's individual groups and their unique commutes that really tell the story. From furthest to closest and shortest to longest, the following groups are in a league by themselves.

- ▶ **Furthest** – Commuters from all points of the compass turn to Metro to get them to work. Check out the origins of these four vans – North, South, East or West, no other groups start from further away: Group 1857 starts in Arlington (North) and group 1418 starts in Cle Elum (East). Group 2082's origin in Olympia gives them furthest South and West!
- ▶ **Most Stops** – How many stops does your group make? With nine stops on their route from beginning to end, group 2102 leads the pack. Eight vanpools make stops at five different worksites for their employers. But groups 1171, 1991 and 2102 get commuters to the most employers – they each stop at five different companies.
- ▶ **Shortest** – You might wish you had this commute. Four Microsoft groups not only commute less than 20 miles each, they never even leave their city. Groups 1864, 1946, 2022 and 2084 all start and end in Redmond.
- ▶ **Longest** – This group gets the nod for furthest East AND the longest commute. Starting in Cle Elum, group 1418 puts an amazing 170 miles a day on their van! Imagine what that would do to their personal cars.

King County Metro is proud to provide a better way to get to work for these, and all groups, in our program. Thanks for your continued use and support of our VanPool and VanShare services. ■

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by the Washington State Department of Transportation with support from transit agencies throughout the state.

The goal is to create new vanpool ridership and sustain existing ridership by promoting the financial and environmental benefits of vanpooling as well as the concept of vanpooling as a chosen lifestyle. No surprise then, that Washington State leads the nation in the number of vanpools used for commuting.

Visit [RideshareOnline.com](http://RideshareOnline.com) or call 206-625-4500 for details. ■

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offers assistance to interested employees in finding other vanpool participants. By having special ETC access to names of Amgen employees registered on RideshareOnline.com, Jan is able to go on the Internet and check for potential matches. To further assist employees interested in vanpooling, Jan posts a list on the transportation commuter board of all vanpools coming to Amgen, where they originate and who the contact person is. This information is also posted on Amgen's web site.

To date, Amgen has 12 vanpools at the company's site in Interbay. Jan also walks the talk, commuting to work from the Eastside in a vanpool. ■

### VanPool Voices

If you have questions, comments or story ideas, send them to: Rideshare Operations, YES-TR-0700, King County Metro, 400 Yesler Way, Seattle WA 98104, call (206) 263-4445 or write [cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov](mailto:cathy.blumenthal@metrokc.gov).

### Alternate Formats Available

**206-263-3792 TTY Relay: 711**